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Environment and sustainable development: implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 87 (see A/57/532, para. 2). Action on sub-item (a) was taken at the 33rd, 34th, 37th, 38th, 42nd and 44th meetings, on 13, 14, 18 and 20 November and 10 and 11 December 2002. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/57/SR.33, 34, 37, 38, 42 and 44).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/57/L.38 and A/C.2/57/L.83

2. At the 37th meeting, on 18 November, the representative of the Venezuela, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "World Summit on Sustainable Development" (A/C.2/57/L.38), which read:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 55/199 of 20 December 2000 and 56/226 of 24 December 2001,

"Recalling also the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in eight parts, under the symbol A/57/532 and Add.1-7.



"Having considered the report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002,

"Welcoming the adoption by the Summit of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development on 4 September 2002,

"Expressing its satisfaction that the World Summit on Sustainable Development and its preparatory committee provided for the active participation of all States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies at the highest level, and of observers and various intergovernmental organizations, as well as the major groups representing all the regions of the world in a bottom-up process,

"Reaffirming the need to ensure a balance between economic development, social development and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development,

"Reaffirming also that poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for, sustainable development,

"Noting the announcement at the Summit of various partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups,

"Expressing its profound gratitude to the Governments and the peoples of Indonesia and South Africa for hosting, respectively, the fourth preparatory committee meeting and the Summit, for the excellent arrangements, the hospitality extended to participants and for the facilities, staff and services placed at their disposal,

"1. Takes note with satisfaction of the report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

"2. Endorses the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

"3. Urges Governments and all relevant international and regional organizations, the Economic and Social Council, United Nations funds, programmes and regional commissions, as well as other intergovernmental organizations and major groups, to take urgent action to ensure the effective follow-up and implementation of the Johannesburg Declaration and the Plan of Implementation;

"4. Calls for the implementation of the commitments, programmes and time-bound targets reached at the World Summit and, to this end, the provision of the means of implementation;

"5. Requests the Economic and Social Council to ensure that the Commission on Sustainable Development holds an organizational session early in 2003;

"6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to prepare a report containing proposals on the modalities of the future work of the Commission, taking into account the decisions contained in the Plan of Implementation;

"7. *Requests also* the Secretary-General to take into full account the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in particular the decisions taken on the institutional framework for sustainable development reflected in chapter X of the Plan of Implementation, in the ongoing process of reform of the United Nations;

"8. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth and subsequent sessions an item entitled 'Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development'."

3. At the 44th meeting, on 11 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Jan Kára (Czech Republic), introduced a draft resolution entitled "World Summit on Sustainable Development" (A/C.2/57/L.83), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.38.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.83 (see para. 10, draft resolution I).

5. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.83, draft resolution A/C.2/57/L. 38 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B. Draft resolutions A/C.2/57/L.45 and A/C.2/57/L.71

6. At the 38th meeting, on 20 November, the representative of the Japan, on behalf of Andorra, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Gabon, Greece, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Lebanon, Luxembourg, the Marshall Islands, Nicaragua, Panama, the Sudan, Thailand and Uganda, introduced a draft resolution entitled "United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development" (A/C.2/57/L.45). Subsequently, Algeria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Guatemala, Haiti, Indonesia, Israel, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, Mongolia and the Russian Federation joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. The draft resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling chapter 36 of Agenda 21 on promoting education, public awareness and training, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992,

"Appreciating the contribution made by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development to the issue of education for sustainable development since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

"Welcoming the fact that the Plan of Implementation adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002, confirmed the importance of education for sustainable development and recommended that the General Assembly consider adopting a decade of education for sustainable development starting in 2005,

"Emphasizing that education is an indispensable element for achieving sustainable development,

"1. Decides to proclaim the ten-year period beginning on 1 January 2005 the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development;

"2. Designates the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as the lead agency for the promotion of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and requests it to develop a draft international implementation scheme, clarifying its relationship with the existing educational processes, including education for all, in consultation with the United Nations and other relevant international organizations, Governments, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders, with a view to providing guidance for Governments to incorporate concrete measures to promote education for sustainable development in their respective national educational plan;

"3. Invites Governments to include the necessary concrete measures to implement the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in their respective national educational plan by the year 2005, in accordance with the international implementation scheme to be prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

"4. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled 'United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development'."

7. At its 42nd meeting, on 10 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Jan Kára (Czech Republic), introduced a draft resolution entitled "World Summit on Sustainable Development" (A/C.2/57/L.71), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.45.

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.71 (see para. 10, draft resolution II).

9. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.71, draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.45 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

10. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Draft resolution I World Summit on Sustainable Development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 55/199 of 20 December 2000 and 56/226 of 24 December 2001,

Recalling also the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,¹ Agenda 21² and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,³

Having considered the report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,⁴ held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002,

Reaffirming in this regard the commitment to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration⁵ and in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and international agreements since 1992,

Welcoming the adoption by the Summit of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development⁶ and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation⁷ on 4 September 2002,

Expressing its satisfaction that the World Summit on Sustainable Development and its preparatory committee provided for the active participation of all States Members of the United Nations and members of the specialized agencies, of observers and various intergovernmental organizations, including the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, at the highest level as well as the major groups representing all the regions of the world,

Reaffirming the need to ensure a balance between economic development, social development and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development,

Reaffirming also that poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for, sustainable development,

Recognizing that good governance within each country and at the international level is essential for sustainable development,

Noting with interest the partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups, and announced at the Summit,

Expressing its profound gratitude to the Governments and the peoples of Indonesia and South Africa for hosting, respectively, the fourth preparatory committee meeting and the Summit, for the excellent arrangements, for the hospitality extended to participants and for the facilities, staff and services placed at their disposal,

¹ *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.1.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference, resolution I, annex I.*

² *Ibid.*, annex II.

³ Resolution S-19/2, annex.

⁴ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1).

⁵ See resolution 55/2.

⁶ *Ibid.*, chap. I, resolution I, annex.

⁷ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

1. *Takes note with satisfaction of the report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;*⁴

2. *Endorses the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development*⁶ *and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;*⁷

3. *Decides to adopt sustainable development as a key element of the overarching framework for United Nations activities, in particular for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,*⁵ *and to give overall political direction to the implementation of Agenda 21 and its review;*

4. *Urges Governments and all relevant international and regional organizations, the Economic and Social Council, United Nations funds, programmes and regional economic commissions, specialized agencies, international financial institutions, the Global Environment Facility, as well as other intergovernmental organizations and major groups, to take timely actions to ensure the effective follow-up and implementation of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;*

5. *Encourages the implementation of partnership initiatives voluntarily undertaken by some Governments, international organizations and major groups, and calls for further discussion of this matter within the Commission on Sustainable Development;*

6. *Calls for the implementation of the commitments, programmes and time-bound targets adopted at the World Summit and, to this end, for the fulfilment of the provisions of the means of implementation as contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;*

7. *Requests the Economic and Social Council to ensure that the Commission on Sustainable Development holds an organizational meeting of its next session in January 2003 and its session in April/May 2003;*

8. *Requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report containing proposals on the modalities of the future work of the Commission, taking into account the decisions contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;*

9. *Requests the Economic and Social Council to implement the provisions of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation relevant to its mandate and, in particular, to promote the implementation of Agenda 21 by strengthening system-wide coordination;*

10. *Requests the Secretary-General to take into full account the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in particular the decisions made on the institutional framework for sustainable development as contained in chapter XI of the Plan of Implementation, in the ongoing process of reform of the United Nations and in his contribution to the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields;*

11. *Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session an item entitled "Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on*

Sustainable Development", and requests the Secretary-General at that session to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

Draft resolution II

United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

The General Assembly,

Recalling chapter 36 of Agenda 21, on promoting education, public awareness and training, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992,⁸

Reaffirming the internationally agreed development goal of achieving universal primary education, in particular that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling,

Appreciating the contribution made by the Commission on Sustainable Development to the issue of education for sustainable development since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

Welcoming the fact that the Plan of Implementation adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development confirmed the importance of education for sustainable development and recommended that the General Assembly consider adopting a decade of education for sustainable development starting in 2005,⁹

Emphasizing that education is an indispensable element for achieving sustainable development,

1. *Decides* to proclaim the ten-year period beginning on 1 January 2005 the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development;

2. *Designates* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as the lead agency for the promotion of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and requests it to develop a draft international implementation scheme, clarifying its relationship with the existing educational processes, in particular the Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum¹⁰ and the United Nations Literacy Decade,¹¹ in consultation with the United Nations and other relevant international organizations, Governments, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders, with a view to providing recommendations for Governments on how to promote and improve the integration of education for sustainable development in their respective educational strategies and action plans at the appropriate level;

3. *Invites* Governments to consider the inclusion of measures to implement the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in their

⁸ See *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigenda), vol. I: *Resolutions adopted by the Conference*, resolution 1, annex II.

⁹ See *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

¹⁰ See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Final Report of the World Education Forum, Dakar, Senegal, 26-28 April 2000* (Paris, 2000).

¹¹ See resolution 56/116.

respective educational strategies and action plans by 2005, taking into account the international implementation scheme to be prepared by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

4. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the item entitled "United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development".